

DEMOCRATIC STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

TO: TOWN CHAIRS
FROM: CHAIRWOMAN NANCY DINARDO
RE: ABSENTEE BALLOT PROCESS OVERVIEW
DATE: OCTOBER 3, 2023

More than most states, Connecticut has strict laws regarding absentee ballots. This memorandum provides a succinct overview of Connecticut's absentee ballot laws.

STEP ONE: ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT

You are eligible to vote by an absentee ballot if the answer is **yes** to any of the following questions prevents you from voting in person:

1. Will you be out of town on Election Day?
2. Does sickness prevent you from voting in person on Election Day?
3. Does a physical disability prevent you from voting in person on election day?
4. Do your religious beliefs prevent you from performing secular activities like voting on Election Day?
5. Will you be performing duties as an election official at a polling place other than your own on Election Day?
6. Are you an active member of the armed forces of the United States?

STEP TWO: DOWNLOAD OR PICK UP AN ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION

Once you determine that you are eligible to vote by absentee ballot, Connecticut law next requires that you submit an application for an absentee ballot. The easiest way to get an absentee ballot is to download it from the Town Clerk's office or stop by the Town Clerk's office to pick up that absentee ballot application. You may also download it at: myvote.ct.gov/getmyab.

STEP THREE: RESTRICTIONS ON REQUESTING ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS

You may download an absentee ballot application or obtain one from the town clerk's office for your own use, for the use of an immediate family member or if you are asked to do so by another person.

If you download or obtain five or more absentee ballot applications for people other than immediate family members, you must:

- register with the Town Clerk and obtain forms from the Town Clerk;
- maintain a list of the names and addresses of those who receive the absentee ballot application; and
- file that list of names and address with the Town Clerk prior to the election.

The voter must fill out the absentee ballot application and then mail or deliver that application to the Town Clerk. A person may assist a voter filling out the application but not the ballot. If a person assists a voter filling out the application, that person must sign the application as an “Assister”.

A person may follow up with a voter to see if they submitted an absentee ballot application.

You cannot give or receive compensation solely for distributing absentee ballot applications.

STEP FOUR: FILLING OUT THE ABSENTEE BALLOT

After submitting an absentee ballot application to the Town Clerk, a voter will receive through the mail the absentee ballot.

No one may assist an individual who is filling out an absentee ballot *except* a designated immediate family member or a caregiver (meaning a person providing care due to illness or disability).

Unless you are a designated immediate family member or a legitimate caregiver, you should not be present when the voter fills out the ballot.

For voters with disabilities, there are rules in place to help fill out the applications. Please check with the Town Clerk’s office for further instruction.

A person may follow up with a voter to see if they cast an absentee ballot.

STEP FIVE: CASTING THE ABSENTEE BALLOT

(a) An absentee ballot is cast when it is mailed by:

- a. The voter;

- b. a designee of the voter who applied for an absentee ballot because of illness or physical disability; or
 - c. a member of the voter's immediate family if the voter is a student.
- (b) An absentee ballot is cast when it is returned the day before Election Day to the town clerk:
 - a. By the voter;
 - b. By the designee of an ill or physically disabled voter; or
 - c. By a member of the voter's immediate family.
- ◆ The person returning a ballot to the town clerk on behalf of a voter must present identification and, on the outer envelope of the absentee ballot, sign his name in the presence of the municipal clerk, and indicate his address, his relationship to the voter or his position, and the date and time of such return.
- ◆ Only the voter who has submitted an absentee ballot application may have in his possession an absentee ballot or ballot envelope, other than that voter's authorized agent and certain government officials.
- ◆ No candidate or agent of a candidate may be present when a voter is filling out an absentee ballot. The only exceptions to this rule are set forth in Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-140b.
- ◆ *Please see Conn. Gen. Stat. §9140b for presidential or overseas ballots or to learn about the federal statute known as the Help America Vote Act.*